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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/825,217	04/16/2004	Hiroki Kusakabe	43888-299	8308

7590

07/05/2006

MCDERMOTT, WILL & EMERY
600 13th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005-3096

EXAMINER

WILLIAMS, SHERMANDA L

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1745

DATE MAILED: 07/05/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

5

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/825,217	Applicant(s) KUSAKABE ET AL.	
	Examiner Shermanda L. Williams	Art Unit 1745	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 April 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

FUEL CELL WITH RECOMBINATION CATALYST

Examiner: Williams S.N. 10/825,217 Art Unit: 1745

Oath/Declaration

The specification to which the declaration is directed has been adequately identified.

Drawings

Applicant's explanation of drawing denotation is accepted. The objection to Figure 1 of the drawings is withdrawn.

Response to Arguments

1. In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the Murakami et al. and Bailey et al. references, the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992).

2. In this case, Bailey (US 6,638,650) presents several applicable techniques or embodiments of the invention for detecting leakage in a solid polymer fuel cell stack. Some of the embodiments presented for leakage detection instruct one to supply both the fuel flow and the oxidant flow during the testing period. Other embodiments as

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discussed below instruct one to only introduce one reactant (the fuel gas) to the cell undergoing testing. Therefore it is clear that ...the stoppage of either said fuel gas or said oxidant gas and the introduction of another gas... as stated in claim 1 of the current application is made obvious when the Murakami et al. and Bailey et al. references are combined. The intended purpose of Bailey et al. to provide several applicable methods of detecting leakage in a solid polymer fuel cell is not compromised or rendered inoperable. The various techniques presented have different flow combination requirements (see claims). The teachings of Murakami et al. is not compromised or rendered inoperable in any way by combining with Bailey et al. to produce a technique that stops one of the reactant flows rather than both. Claim 1 does not require the stoppage of both reactant gases. (Column 1 lines 43- 56 explains what Bailey et al. considers to be the content of the fuel and oxidant flow stream.)

3. The embodiment of the invention given in column 3 line 65 to column 4 lines 6 of Bailey et al. gives the instruction. to introduce only the fuel fluid stream and an inert gas during the leakage testing period. There is no oxidant flow supplied to the cell during the leakage testing per this embodiment of the invention. The oxidant fluid flow has been stopped during the performance of this testing technique.

4. The embodiment or technique given in column 4 lines 44-59 of Bailey et al. instructs one to only supply fuel and inert gas to the cell during the leakage evaluation period. The oxidant fluid flow has been stopped during the performance of this testing technique. There is no oxidant flow supplied to the cell during the leakage testing per this embodiment of the invention.

5. Applicant's arguments filed 4/26/2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Claims 1-11 remain rejected on the grounds presented in the Office Action dated January 26, 2006.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).


A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Shermanda L. Williams whose telephone number is (272) 571-8915. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Thurs. 7 AM - 4:30 PM and alternating Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick Ryan can be reached on (272) 571-1292. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



STEPHEN KALAFUT
PRIMARY EXAMINER
GROUP
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